

Cops identify Aishe, 8 others for JNU violence

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New Delhi, Jan 10 (IANS) The Delhi Police's Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) violence, on Friday identified nine students, including JNU Students Union chief Aishe Ghosh, as suspects in the incidents in the varsity premises that left 36 injured.

The SIT sleuths have clearly stated that Ghosh was behind a mob attack in the afternoon on January 5 at Periyar hostel. The SIT has also stated that Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) members in retaliation of being attacked at Periyar hostel in the afternoon carried out attack during evening at Sabarmati Hostel.

The SIT has also said that the JNU Students' Union comprising of four Left-affiliated organisations -- Students Federation of India (SFI), All India Students Federation (AISF), All India Students Association (AISA) and Democratic Students Federation (DSF) - are behind entire mess and violence in the varsity, from disrupting other students to carry out studies to picking up fights.

"They are identified as Chunchun Kumar, Ex Student; Pankaj Mishra, School of Social Sciences (SSS), Mahi-Mandavi hostel; Aishe Ghosh, President JNUSU; Vaskar Vijay Mech, MA, School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU; Sucheta Taludar, SFI School of Social Sciences,

JNU; Priya Ranjan, School of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, Mandavi Hostel; Dolan Samanta, School of Social Science, Centre of Historical Studies; Yogendra Bhardwaj, PHD Sanskrit JNU and Vikas Patel, MS Korean," the SIT said in its statement.

The SIT, headed by DCP, Crime, Joy Tirkey, comprises three Assistant Commissioners of Police and 60 personnel.

"In last few days, misinformation and wrong information are in circulation, particularly about investigation in the JNU violence cases," Tirkey told reporters.

"We are briefing you so that the chain of incidents could be brought in right perspective. We are updating about investigation done so far. These cases are related to reputed institution where students were involved in the violence," he said.

He explained that the JNU administration decided to carry out online registration of the students for the next semester between January 1 and 5.

"Registration happens every six months. In January, it is called winter registration. This registration was to be carried within five day timeline. Earlier, it used to be manually but eventually online portal was started," the DCP said.

This was a provisional registration wherein students had to pay Rs 300 and register themselves for the next semester.

"These four organisations - the Left student unions - and their sympathisers and members were against the registration process," stressed DCP adding that these groups' members were on protest since October 28, 2019 over fee hike and other issues.

They had been demanding to resolve the issues first and then will allow registration process.

"I interacted with students for last four days and majority of them actually wanted to get registered because new year has started and they have to further study," he said pointing that these particular groups were, however, not allowing these students to register and when they tried to do it they were threatened and intimidated.

These things have come into the investigation so far, the officer said.

Explaining the sequence of the events, Tirkey said that on January 3, at around 1 p.m., members of these four organisations during online registration process near centralised computer area forcefully entered into the server room and dismantle the computers, manhandled the staff, threw them out of the server room and closed down the server.

Because of this, the registration process stopped. The JNU administration gave a complaint regarding this and an FIR of assault, criminal intimidation and Section 3 of Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act against few students, including Ghosh, was registered. A total eight students were named in the FIR.

Thereafter, it took around three hours for JNU authorities to restore the system. When the system got restored, these organisations' members thought their issues have not been resolved and administration was successfully carrying out registration process.

Seeing this, on January 4, these organisation members again tried to manhandle the staff of the varsity at server room in the morning but as the authorities were fully prepared they could not do anything.

But during afternoon, these organisation members broke down the glass frame door and damaged the servers. It was major loss to the authorities.

"The JNU administration finally started the server on Thursday and registration process started," he said. The administration gave a complaint to the local police following which FIR was registered. These four organisations had been at odds with the authorities and other JNU students.

Explaining the sequence, he said that on January 5 at 11 a.m., four students were trying to register for next semester and they were sitting on a bench outside School of Social Sciences. "Then these group members reached over there bashed them. When the security guards came to rescue them they were also beaten up at 11.30 a.m.," he said.

Thereafter, at 3.45 p.m. members of these four organisations carried out attack at Periyar hostel. They had mufflers at their faces, but now they have been identified.

"Some members of JNU Student Union including its President Aishe Ghosh have also been identified in the camera. They went inside the hostel premises and carried out vandalism, students were beaten up and many got injured," he said.

Police in plainclothes were there and with the help of the teachers, the injured were taken to AIIMS trauma centre. "During this attack, specific rooms were targeted inside the hostels," the DCP stressed.

When police were shifting the injured to the hospital, there was a peace meeting organized at interaction of Periyar hostel and Sabarmati Hostel. A congregation of around 150 students and teachers gathered over there at 5.30 p.m.

As the meeting was going on, another group of students came, a few in muffled faces, carrying sticks and rods and had arguments at the congregation which dispersed fearing violence.

They went to the specific room and attacked the students and vandalized the hostel.

"In both attacks in two different hostels, there were internal elements in the mob. They specific rooms and specific students were targeted. It is tough for outsiders to come and carry out attack," said the DCP adding that at 7 p.m. it was dark and it would have been tough for an outsider to carry out such attack.

"Spill over of the attack also happened in Narmada hostel," he said.

The DCP said that they have spoken cross section of teachers, students, staff, administration and hostel wardens. "We have taken visitors register. We have carried out technical analysis on who are outsiders and who are hostellers," he said.

He also said that he could not get the CCTV footage as on January 3-4, members of these organisations damaged the administration server room. "We collected lot of videos and photo graphs viral on social platforms. We spoke to around 30 to 32 witnesses in the cases and accordingly identified nine suspected students so far," he said.

The DCP clarified that they have not detained any single student and they will call these all nine students and will seek explanation about their role in the violent attack.

He also said that he has found that a few whatsapp groups were active and a whatsapp group was formed at 5.30 p.m. only with name Unity against Left. "We have identified the administrator of the group and it had 60 members. We will go through other groups also," he added.

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